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Daily Environment Report

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Leading the News

Pesticides

Mixed Review of Glyphosate Links to Cancer Frustrates Some

A report summarizing scientists' views on whether Monsanto Co.'s herbicide Roundup could be linked to cancer is leaving some with more questions than answers.

Pesticides

Panel Fails to Endorse EPA Decision on Herbicide Cancer Risk

A report on glyphosate, the world's most popular weedkiller, from a panel advising the Environmental Protection Agency failed to reach a consensus on whether the agency was right to say the chemical isn't likely to cause cancer.

News

Air Pollution

Alberta Orders Operators to Capture 95% of Escaping Gas

The Alberta Energy Regulator ordered oil and gas operators in the province's northwest to conserve at least 95 percent of the produced gas normally vented to the atmosphere or burned

off through flaring or incineration, effective April 1.

Air Pollution

Holcomb Power Plant Air Permit Upheld by Kansas Court

Kansas regulators legally approved modifications to a Clean Air Act operating permit granted to Sunflower Electric Power Corp. to expand its Holcomb Station power plant, the state's Supreme Court ruled (*Sierra Club v. Mosier*, 2017 BL 83721, Kan., No. 112008, 3/17/17).

Air Pollution

Neighbor of Washington Nuclear Site Sues EPA Over Clean Air Permit

A neighbor downwind of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington sued the Environmental Protection Agency March 16 to force it to respond to his petition that the agency object to a Clean Air Act permit for the site (*Green v. Pruitt*, E.D. Wash., No. 4:17-cv-05034, 3/16/17).

Air Pollution

Volkswagen Diesel Settlement Negotiators Awarded \$175 Million

Volkswagen will pay \$175 million to the attorneys who negotiated a \$14.7 billion settlement on behalf of consumers who owned and leased the company's over-emitting diesel vehicles (In re Volkswagen "Clean Diesel" Mktg., Sales Practices and Prod., Bankr. N.D. Cal., No. 15-md-2672, 3/17/17).

Asbestos

Foster Wheeler Faces Trial in Asbestos Exposure Case

Foster Wheeler LLC must prove to a jury that it has defenses to asbestos exposure claims brought by a U.S. Navy technician, the District of Rhode Island ruled March 16 (*Stevens v. Air & Liquid Sys. Corp.*, 2017 BL 83281, D.R.I., No. 14-cv-00157, 3/16/17).

Biofuels

Icahn Pressed EPA Candidates on Ethanol Rule He Wants Scrapped

Billionaire investor Carl Icahn, who helped President Donald Trump vet candidates to lead the Environmental Protection Agency, pressed them for their views on a regulation that he says is costing his oil refineries hundreds of millions of dollars a year.

Biofuels

Senators Press White House, EPA to Explain Icahn's Biofuel Role

Six Democratic senators are pressing the White House and U.S. environmental chief Scott Pruitt to detail their interactions with Carl Icahn, a billionaire investor and regulatory adviser to President Donald Trump who is seeking to alter a program mandating the use of biofuels.

Budget

Alberta Earmarks Millions for Climate Initiatives

Alberta will provide C\$1 billion (\$750 million) over three years for climate initiatives, including support for renewables, and funding for coal communities, Finance Minister Joe Ceci said.

Budget

Pennsylvania to Pruitt: EPA Cuts 'Devastating'

President Donald Trump's proposed fiscal 2018 budget would have "immediate and devastating" impacts on Pennsylvania's ability to ensure clean air, safe water and a prospering economy, the state's acting environmental secretary says.

Chemical Security

Names of Thousands of Formerly Regulated Chemical Plants Sought

A public interest advocacy group is suing the Department of Homeland Security to force the release of documents on chemical plant operations three years after the agency failed to provide the information under a public records request.

Climate Change

BlackRock Finds Shareholder Action Goes Both Ways

BlackRock prefers to engage with companies behind the scenes. But getting the world's largest

money manager to commit to a stronger position on climate change ironically took the threat of a public vote on the issue at its own shareholder meeting.

Climate Change

Global Emissions and Economic Growth Parting Ways, Trend Finds

Global energy-related carbon dioxide emissions remained flat a third-straight year in 2016 even as economic output expanded, suggesting that economic growth's marriage with emissions may be weakening.

Coal Mining

Administration and Enviros Clash Over Utah Coal Lease

Environmentalists and the Trump administration are at odds over the meaning of a recent coal lease in central Utah, from which 56 million tons of the mineral will be extracted.

Drinking Water

Flint Gets \$100 Million to Improve Drinking Water

An Environmental Protection Agency award of \$100 million to Flint, Mich., will help the city begin work to rehabilitate its once notoriously deficient drinking water system.

EPA

No Leadership? Delay Rules' Implementation, Pruitt Says

Five Obama-era EPA rules on issues from air quality to pesticides won't take effect until May 22 because of the lack of Senate-confirmed leadership at the agency to review them.

Energy

Court Orders Tepco to Pay Fukushima Evacuees Compensation

Tokyo Electric Power Co. Holdings Inc. and the Japanese government were ordered by a district court to compensate a group of evacuees for emotional distress following the Fukushima nuclear accident, NHK reported.

Energy

May Says U.K. Energy Market 'Manifestly' Not Working for Clients

The U.K. power and gas market "manifestly" isn't working for consumers, Prime Minister Theresa May said in her strongest signal yet that she's preparing to intervene to contain price hikes by the so-called "Big Six" utilities.

Energy

Mexico Committed to Attracting Energy Investment, Even Without U.S.

Mexico intends to stay the course on opening up its energy resources for international investment, even if its relationship with the U.S. deteriorates, a former senior energy minister said March 16 at the Atlantic Council.

Enforcement

Beijing Eco-Cops Score First Air Pollution Arrest

A new environmental police unit from Beijing's Public Security Bureau made its first arrest related to air-pollution violations.

Hydraulic Fracturing

Maryland Governor Endorses State Fracking Ban

Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan (R) endorsed legislation that would ban hydraulic fracturing in the state, surprising people on both sides of the issue.

International Climate

China's Greenhouse Gases Fall Again Despite Economic Growth

China's carbon dioxide pollution level slipped last year even as the economy grew 6.7 percent, suggesting the world's biggest emitter is using energy more efficiently.

International Climate

G-20 Finance Chiefs Said to Drop Climate Reference in Document

Finance ministers from the world's biggest economies dropped a reference to climate change in

a draft of their statement at a Group of 20 meeting, frustrating plans by Germany to devote a section to the topic, according to people familiar with the talks.

Oil & Gas

Australian Firm Floats LNG Import Plan to Fix Energy Shortfall

SEA LNG, a closely-held Australian company, said it plans to build a A\$600 million (\$461 million) gas-fired power plant using imported fuel to overcome the country's looming energy crisis.

Oil & Gas

Permian Pipeline Developers Play Catch-Up as Drilling Booms

Pipeline companies serving the prolific Permian Basin of West Texas and New Mexico are racing to catch up to a drilling boom that wasn't in their sights as recently as six months ago.

Pesticides

Missouri Bill Targets Off-Label Use of Weed Killers

Missouri farmers who damage a neighbor's crops through misusing herbicides will soon be subject to sharply increased fines.

Radioactive Waste

Kansas Chemist Charged With Mishandling Radioactive Waste

A radiation safety officer in Kansas allegedly stored radioactive waste illegally and submitted false tax records, the Department of Justice announced March 16.

Regulatory Policy

Lawmakers Negotiating '17 Bills While Positioning for '18 Battles

House and Senate appropriators will be under siege on two fronts the week of March 20 as they try to negotiate deals to wrap up the fiscal year 2017 spending bills while beginning work on next year's measures.

Renewable Energy

Brazil to Hold First Renewable Energy Auction for Amazon

Brazil said it would hold its first auction specifically to sell future renewable power for part of the vast Amazon rainforest region, and offered an unprecedented 1 percent interest rate to help finance winning projects.

Renewable Energy

Eskom Agrees \$430 Million French Loan to Expand Transmission

The French Agency for Development agreed to lend South Africa's Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd. 400 million euros (\$430 million), to help extend the country's power-transmission system and increase renewable-energy connections.

Renewable Energy

German Coal Mine to Be Reborn as Giant Pumped Hydropower Battery

A coal-mine that powered German industry for almost half a century will get a new lease on life when it's turned into a giant battery that stores excess solar and wind energy.

Renewable Energy

Scotland Backs Deep Water Floating Offshore Wind Farm

Scotland gave consent for the construction of two floating wind turbines in deep waters off the north coast of Britain.

Renewable Energy

State Buildings Could Be Getting Solar Panels Under N.M. Bill

State buildings in New Mexico could soon be used to generate solar power—and possibly other renewable energy later on—under a bill passed by the state Legislature.

Solid Waste

Kenya to Ban Plastic Grocery Bags This Year

Kenya will ban the use of disposable plastic bags for shopping or in commercial and household

packaging by September, the government announced.

Water Pollution

Water Rule Venue Case Could Stay in Limbo If High Court Pauses

The question of which court should hear challenges to a much-debated Clean Water Act rule will remain in limbo if the U.S. Supreme Court agrees to the Trump administration's request to delay scheduling briefs in the case until it can come up with an alternative (*Nat'l Ass'n of Mfrs. v. DOD*, U.S., No. 16-299, briefs filed 3/15/17).

Water Resources

With 100 Days of Water Left, Cape Town Risks Running Dry

Cape Town, the crown jewel of South Africa's tourism industry, has 100 days before it runs out of water.

Regulatory Agenda

TODAY'S FEDERAL REGISTER

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